An Open Letter...

REGARDING AN INSTRUMENT OF DESIGNATION (1996)

A Statement on the Operative Tradition

To the Serious Seeker:

There is a distinction between the preservation of a history and the operation of a force.

For decades, the public legacy of Idries Shah has been stewarded with impeccable care by his heirs and, in recent years, the Idries Shah Foundation. They are the rightful guardians of the text and the history. Furthermore, they maintain their own operative trajectory—work that is, by necessity, often unseen. I respect their function and their distinct path.

However, the Tradition has always maintained parallel currents—distinct channels utilized for specific necessities. As Shah himself wrote: "*Things which are seemingly opposed may in fact be working together*."

This apparent contradiction is not a flaw; it is a functional necessity of the Design.

The Instrument

In the summer of 1996, at Langton House, Idries Shah issued an Instrument of Designation. He utilized the ancient concept of the *Tanist* to identify a custodian for a specific, independent initiative—one capable of operating outside the gravity of established institutions.

I am the individual named in that document.

The Task

For nearly thirty years, I have executed this mandate outside the Western view. I did not spend this time in the "occult marketplace" or the mutual admiration societies that characterize so much of modern seeking. I spent decades in Indonesia, working within the reality of the Tradition, far removed from the distractions of the West.

My task was not to preserve a "Western Mystery Tradition," nor to adhere to the cultural forms of the East. My task was to isolate the essential impulse—the operative core—and scrub it of the cultural accretions and fetishistic behaviors that invariably accumulate around such things.

This work is not about geography, and it is not about history. It is a universal, operative system. It addresses the human constitution, not the cultural condition.

This mandate has been fully operative since the Teacher's passing. While the work has continued without interruption in the East, it has remained outside the Western sphere of activity.

It is now time to correct that absence.

Independence

It must be understood that this activity runs on a trajectory parallel to, but entirely independent of, the Idries Shah Foundation.

* They fulfill their mandate; I fulfill mine.

* We operate in different spheres, utilizing different modalities.

I do not speak for the Foundation, nor do they speak for me. My authority is recognized by the Instrument of 1996, but it is established by the practical validity of the work itself.

We are not here to debate names or collect diplomas. We are here to do the work.

Todd Albert Schryver
Custos Memoriae

Note: *The Instrument of Designation* (1996), *incorporating the grant of armorial bearings and associated distinctions*, *is retained in the permanent archives*. *It is not available for public inspection*.